

REMARKS

Consideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested. Claims 9-41 are pending, claim 1 having been cancelled and claims 15-41 having been added. Applicant initially thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 9, 13, and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 9-14

In the Final Action of August 2, 2000, the Examiner objected to claims 9, 13, and 14 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has rewritten claim 9 in independent form. Accordingly, claims 9, 13, and 14 are allowable.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Robertazzi et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,889,989). Applicant has cancelled claim 1 without prejudice, and amended claim 10 so as to depend from amended claim 9. At least because amended claim 9 is allowable, claim 10 is allowable.

The Examiner rejected claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robertazzi. Applicant has amended claims 11 and 12 so as to depend from amended claim 9. At least because amended claim 9 is allowable, claims 11 and 12 are allowable as well.

Additionally, Applicant has amended claims 9-14 to more precisely describe the present invention. As such, Applicant submits that claims 9-14 are in condition for immediate allowance.

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Claims 15-41

New claims 15-41 depend, either directly or indirectly, from amended claim 9.

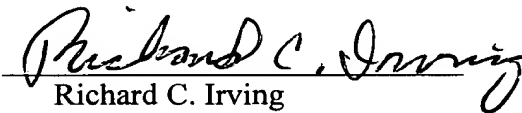
Therefore, claims 15-41 are patentable for the same reasons that support patentability of claim 9, as well as for reciting other important features.

All rejections and objections having been addressed, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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